

REMARKS

The office action rejected pending claims 1-19. The specification has been amended as suggested by the Examiner. No new matter has been added. Applicant respectfully traverses the rejection of claims 1-19 and requests allowance of the application for the reasons below.

Specification

The specification has been amended as suggested by the Examiner.

Claims Rejections – 35 USC § 102

Claims 1-3, 5, 7-8 and 16 have been rejected under 35 USC §102(e) as being anticipated by Cheng et al. (U.S. Patent no. 6,731,314). Applicant respectfully disagrees with the Examiner's reading of Cheng as applied to the claimed invention.

The Examiner makes specific reference to elements 10 and 12 in FIG. 2 and equates those elements to components for handling a virtual reality environment as disclosed in the present invention. Those elements have nothing to do with virtual reality systems. In fact, those elements simply represent a client/server computing environment. In particular, referring to FIG. 2, element 8 is a browser or client computer and element 10 is a server computer for processing rich media and HTML files using a **three-dimensional** graphical user interface. Although the computer system mentions that it can handle real time data and streaming data over a network, it does not mention a virtual reality system.

In sharp contrast, Applicant's invention, as recited in claim 1, is directed to a virtual reality system for handling virtual reality data thereby facilitating a virtual reality episode. A virtual reality episode is the representation of virtual reality data to a user via virtual reality environment (VRE) equipment. The system facilitates the setup and conduction of a virtual reality episode that occurs in real time, such that a user can participate in an episode that represents events presently occurring in an environment. The system allows a first user at a first geographical location to participate in a virtual reality episode with a second user at a second geographical location that is remote from the first geographical location. In contrast, although Cheng discloses the use of a **three-dimensional** GUI in a client/sever environment capable of handling real time data, Cheng makes no mention or suggestion of a **virtual reality** system much less a **virtual reality episode** between two users over a disperse geographical locations as recited in claim 1 of the present invention.

That is, Cheng provides a **three-dimensional** GUI and handles **real time** data, however, such concepts are not same as **virtual reality** techniques as in the claimed invention. To sum, the concepts in Cheng are not the same as those in the claimed invention. Consequently, Cheng fails to teach or suggest independent claim 1 and dependent claims 2-3, 5, 7-8 and thus does not anticipate the claimed invention for at least the above reasons. Independent claim 16 recites similar subject matter as claim 1 and thus Cheng does not anticipate claim 16 for at least the same reasons as claim 1.

Claims 17-19 have been rejected under 35 USC §102(e) as being anticipated by French et al. (U.S. Patent no. 6,308, 565). Applicant respectfully disagrees with the Examiner's reading of French as applied to the claimed invention.

The French reference describes a system 10 that allows a user represented by icon 32 to interact with an opponent represented by icon 34. Like the system of Cheng above, the French system does not facilitate the setup and conduction of a **virtual reality episode** in real time as contemplated by the present invention.

In contrast to French, the present invention allows a first user at a first geographical location to participate in a **virtual reality episode** with a second user at a second geographical location that is remote from the first geographical location. Participation in a virtual reality episode is facilitated in part by transmitting and receiving virtual reality data via a network, such as a packet-switched network, with other components capable of presenting the virtual reality data. As explained above, although French discloses a computer system, it fails to disclose techniques for allowing users to engage in a **virtual reality episode** as disclosed by the present invention. Consequently, French fails to teach independent claim 17 and dependent claims 18-19 and thus does not anticipate the claimed invention for at least the above reasons.

Claims Rejections – 35 USC § 103

Claims 4, 6 and 9-15 have been rejected under 35 USC § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Cheng in view of French.

As outlined above in response to the Examiner's rejection under 35 USC § 102(e), Cheng does not anticipate independent claim 1. Thus, for at least the same reasons as claim 1, Cheng fails to teach or suggest respective dependent claims 4 and 6 of the present invention. Moreover, as explained above French fails to anticipate independent claim 17. Claim 9 recites similar subject matter as claim 17 and thus French fails to teach

or suggest claim 9 for at least the same reasons as claim 17. Therefore, Cheng, alone or in combination with French, fails to teach or suggest claims 4, 6 and 9-15.

Request for Reconsideration pursuant to 37 CFR 1.111

Having responded to each and every ground for objection and rejection in the Office Action mailed on December 14, 2004, Applicant requests reconsideration in the instant application pursuant to 37 CFR 1.111 and requests that the Examiner allow claims 1-19 and pass the application to issue. Please charge any fee due to our Deposit Account No. 50-1561, and reference Attorney Docket No. 29633.046500. If there is any point requiring further attention prior to allowance, the Examiner is asked to contact Applicants' counsel who can be reached at the telephone number listed below.

Respectfully,
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